REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the the following remarks.

Claims 1-38 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 6, 10,15,16, 21, and 31 are the independent claims.

No claims have been amended.

Claims 1, 4, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated U.S. Patent No. 5,887,456 (Tanigawa et al.). Claims 6-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,806,204 (Hoffman et al.). Claims 15, 31-34, 37, and 38 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated U.S. Patent No. 6,161,306 (Clodic). Claims 2 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanigawa in view of Clodic. Claims 10-14 and 16-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,250,628 (Smith et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No 5,228,212 (Turetta et al.). Claims 35 and 36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clodic. All rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 recites, inter alia, a water temperature detecting unit to detect temperatures of [condensed] water.

Independent claim 6 recites, inter alia, a water temperature detecting unit to detect temperatures of [condensed] water.

Independent claim 10 recites, inter alia, terminating a drying process if an end of the drying process is determined to be reached based upon detected [condensed] water temperatures.

Independent claim 15 recites, inter alia, a temperature detector to detect a temperature of condensed water.

Independent claim 16 recites, inter alia, a controller to terminate a drying process according to changes in a temperature of condensed water.

Independent claim 21 recites, inter alia, a controller to terminate a drying process according to changes in temperature of condensed water and accumulatively counted drying time.

Independent claim 31 recites, inter alia, detecting changes in temperature of condensed water.

However, Applicant respectfully submits that none of the asserted citations teaches or suggests at least the aforementioned features of independent claims 1, 6, 10, 15, 16, 21, and 31. Thus, without conceding the propriety of combining the asserted citations in the manner suggested in the Office Action, any combination of the asserted citations is likewise deficient.

Tanigawa et al., applied against independent claim 1, relates to a drum type drying/washing machine and teaches an apparatus that includes a drum 3 formed with an exhaust duct 7 on which an exhausted air sensor 8 is provided. (Tanigawa et al., Col. 8, lines 47-50; FIG. 1). The Office Action contends that the exhaust air sensor meets the aforementioned feature of independent claim 1. (Office Action, page 2). However, the exhaust air sensor senses the temperature of exhausted air, not temperatures of condensed water. (See e.g., Tanigawa et al., page 9, lines 29-34, lines 43-47). Thus, this contention is respectfully traversed.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are respectfully requested.

Hoffman et al., cited against independent claim 6, relates to a material dryer using a vacuum drying and vapor condensation and teaches a device that includes chamber 12 and sensors 38 which sense the relative humidity, pressure, and temperature of the drying chamber 12. (Hoffman et al., Col. 4, line 66 - Col. 5, line 3; FIG. 1). The Office Action contends that the sensors meet the aforementioned feature of independent claim 6. (Office Action, page 3). However, Hoffman et al. is silent as to measuring the temperature of condensed water, instead expressly teaching that the sensors 38 measure the relative humidity, pressure and temperature of the drying chamber. Thus, this contention is respectfully traversed.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are respectfully requested.

Clodic, cited against claims 15 and 31, relates to a method and apparatus for drying a load of moist fibrous material and teaches a device that includes an enclosure 1 connected to a outlet conduit which is connected to a principal pipe 4 connected in a closed principal circuit through which steam from a steam generator 8 flows. (Clodic, Col. 2, lines 52-68). Further, probes 28 and 29 are respectively mounted at an inlet and an outlet of the enclosure. (Clodic, Col. 38-43; FIG. 1). The Office Action contends that the sensors meet the aforementioned feature of independent claims 15 and 31. (Office Action, page 5). However, while Clodic teaches that the probes measure the temperature of the fluid flowing in the principal circuit,

Clodic expressly defines the fluid as "steam and/or air." (Clodic, Col. 3, line 39). Thus, this contention is respectfully traversed.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15 and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 are respectfully requested.

Smith et al., cited in combination with Turetta et al. against independent claims 10, 16, and 21, relates to a microwave fabric dryer method and apparatus and, as the Office Action notes at pages 7 and 8, does not teach or suggest the aforementioned features of claims 10, 16, and 21. Nonetheless, the Office Action contends that Turetta et al. provides this requisite teaching. Specifically, citing column 4, lines 29-41 of Turetta et al. for support, the Office Action states that Turetta et al. discloses "determining a drying process if an end of the drying process is determined to be reached based upon the detected water temperature." (Office Action, page 8). This contention is respectfully traversed.

Turetta et al. relates to a method and apparatus for controlling the drying stage in a clothes dryer or washing machine and teaches a control unit 27 connected to means for measuring water variation in at least one of two vessels 15 and 19. (Turetta et al., Col. 3, lines 40-47). Absent from Turetta et al. is a teaching or suggestion of controlling a drying operation based on a temperature of condensed water. Indeed, Turetta et al. expressly teaches "means for monitoring and controlling a drying operation in accordance with the quantity of water present in at least one said two vessels 15 and 19." (Turetta et al., Col. 4, lines 36-39). Thus, Turetta et al. does not remedy the aforementioned deficiency of Smith et al.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10, 16, and 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the independent claims patentably define the present invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action. However, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to such matters.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the

present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: October 28, 2004

By: _____
Michael E. Kondoudis
Registration No. 42,758

1201 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501